

CHAPTER IV THE COMING OF URBAN THE FIFTH

" Tu es qui venture es, an allum expectamua " ?—Matth.
xi. 3. "Colui che fece per vilti lo gran nfiuto."—Dante, *Inf.*
III. 59, 60.

GUILLAUME DE GiuMOARD, Abbot of St. Victor of Marseilles, was at Florence, on his way to Naples on a mission from the Pope to Queen Giovanna, when the news reached Italy that Innocent VI was dead. " I dare to say," quoth the worthy monk, when he heard the tidings, ^{<c} that if, by the grace of God, I were to see a Pope who would come to Italy, to the true papal seat, and would beat down the tyrants, I should be happy, if I had to die the next day."¹ On his return from Naples, he arrived at Marseilles at the end of October, 1362, to be met by a message from the Sacred College informing him that (owing to a deadlock in the conclave) he had been elected Pope. He was crowned at Avignon, under the tide of Urban the Fifth.

The newly elected Pontiff was fifty-three years old. Never having been a cardinal, he was untainted by the corruption of the Curia. A man of simple and blameless life, learned and devout, he hated pomp and luxury, abominated simony and nepotism and all the vices he saw around him. His choice of a name, *Urban*[^] was held by the Italians to point towards Rome.² In the preceding year, he had been sent as ambassador to Bernabo Visconti, to urge the rights of the Church upon Bologna ; the tyrant, in one of his outbursts of bestial fury, had forced him to eat the fragments of the papal brief and driven him with contumely from Milan, according to one account with even grosser personal outrage. He knew then, by personal experience, what these tyrants of Italy were like. When Bernabo's ambassadors arrived to congratulate him on his election and to express their master's

¹ M. Villani, xi. 26.

^a Cf. Petrarca, *Rerun Senilium*, Lib. VII. ep. T,